

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# DRAFT

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name North Grove School

other names/site number Lindahl School, Brickville School

### 2. Location

street & number 26475 Brickville Road

☐ not for publication

city or town Sycamore

☐ vicinity

state Illinois

code IL

county DeKalb

code 037

zip code 60178-8650

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this \_\_\_ nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

\_\_\_ national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

Signature of certifying official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official

Date

Title

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

\_\_\_ entered in the National Register

\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

DRAFT

## 5. Classification

### Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

<input type="checkbox"/>	private
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	public - Local
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - State
<input type="checkbox"/>	public - Federal

### Category of Property

(Check only one box)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	building(s)
<input type="checkbox"/>	district
<input type="checkbox"/>	site
<input type="checkbox"/>	structure
<input type="checkbox"/>	object

### Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1		buildings
		district
1		site
1	2	structure
3	1	object
		<b>Total</b>

### Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)  
n/a

### Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

n/a

## 6. Function or Use

### Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RELIGION/church school

EDUCATION/school

SOCIAL/clubhouse

### Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/school

## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER/one room schoolhouse

### Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: CONCRETE

walls: WOOD/weatherboard

roof: WOOD/shingle

other: BRICK



DRAFT

### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

### **Summary Paragraph**

The North Grove School is a one-room schoolhouse built by Swedish immigrants in 1878. It is located four miles north and west of the city of Sycamore, Illinois, at 26475 Brickville Road. It is surrounded by a school yard in a corn field. The area is slowly being overtaken by housing development. The school is especially noted for being the one remaining one-room school in DeKalb County, Illinois, that has not changed in structure since being used as a school and also remains on the location where it was built. The North Grove School retains the "integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association."

The school property consists of one contributing building (the schoolhouse), one contributing structure (the garage), three contributing objects (the pump, flagpole and swing set), two noncontributing structures (the privies), and one noncontributing object (historical marker)

### **Narrative Description**

#### **SITE:**

The North Grove School is located on approximately 1/3 acre of land on the west side of Brickville Road about 4 miles north and west of Sycamore, DeKalb County, Illinois. The north, west and south sides of the schoolyard are fenced with a 4-board high fence, which is a replacement of an earlier fence of the same type. A galvanized iron pipe hitching post with wood fence posts across part of the front, which was erected in 1970, again recalls an earlier construction. A metal tablet historic marker, dated 1970 is positioned in the front yard. A slide, flagpole and swing set appear to be from the 1940-50 period: a frame garage, from the 1920s. A metal structure is on the property and once was the support pole that was attached to chains and rings for swinging; the rings and chains have been removed. The metal structure is still on the property and is used as a maypole. The pump on the well at the front of the school bears a patent date of 1912. The drilling of the well was paid by the township on December 7, 1925 to William Gilbert.

At the back of the school yard are two privies. The one on the south is a 4'2" x 6'0" 3-holer with lids and a concrete base; on the north, 4'2" x 5'5" 2-holer. These outhouses were reconstructed in the 1970s by volunteers. They are frame construction with 5 1/2" vertical boards 1" thick. The present replica outhouses are in the same location as they were at the time the school closed.

#### **BUILDING:**

The building, painted white, is immediately distinguishable as a one-room school by its form, its grouping of four windows on the south elevation, and its relation to the road (axis of symmetry perpendicular with the road). In the 1920s, the front of the building was changed from a smaller entry vestibule and was replaced by hipped roof extension that housed coat storage and provided room for bookshelves and a sink.

The building is of wood frame construction, 1 3/4" x 6 1/2" floor joists, and 2'0" on centers let into 6 1/2" sills. The walls are 1 3/4" x 3 3/4" studs. Exterior walls are 5" thick, which includes both exterior lapped siding and interior finish boards. Entry to the attic is through a door at the west gable.

Windows are all the same size on the original part of the building, 4 lites over 4 lites, each lite 12" x 16". Windows are double hung 2'4" x 5'9" with original hardware, sills, trim, etc. There are 4 windows grouped on the south and two spaced on the north. Originally there were only two windows on the south wall but, to comply with a new state law mandating more sunlight in 1919, two more windows were added. Most glass is not original but is period. Two windows originally on the front elevation were filled in with bookcases when the front entryway was expanded. Most of the coat hooks in the front extension are early. Hardware remaining on exterior walls indicates that there were shutters hung on windows at one time.

Exterior trim includes plain boards around windows and doors and at corners. A large crown mold runs at roof edge and up the gables. This same molding was used at all roof edges of the removed entry as shown in early pictures.



Early pictures also indicate that the present 6-panel stile and rail door (2'8" x 6'5" with transom), located between the entry extension and the schoolroom, was originally the main exterior door in the original entry vestibule.

The roof is sawn cedar shingles put on in the 1970 restoration and the ridge is covered with a galvanized-iron half-round. Both reflect original construction methods. Roofing on front extension is also sawn cedar shingles, replaced in 2008. Roofing on back extension is mineral roll-roofing. All roofing is in good repair.

The exterior additions of the 1920s (the expanded front entry and the rear wood, storage room) are both covered with weatherboard siding, 4 ½" to the weather, which matches siding on the original building. Windows on the back addition are 4 lite sliders; on the front addition, they are 4 lite side hinged. The existing front door is 2'7 1/8" x 6'10" 6-panel. The door, on the south side of the original school is 2'7" x 6'10", and was added for fire safety at some point. It is a stile and rail door with panic bars. Above it is a metal ventilator. The original board front walks had been replaced with concrete at an earlier date and are again new in 2008.

### **INTERIOR:**

The interior of the front vestibule addition extends 7'6" inside measurement by the width of the building and has 3 ¼" tongue-and-groove painted floorboards, a 4'0" wainscote of 3 ¼" vertical oak, double beaded (1 1/8" on centers) with the crown mold on top. The ceiling is of the same material, stained. Walls are painted beaverboard above the wainscote. Original windows show the backs of that shelving built into them when the addition was constructed. Coathooks (some early) are still in place. A dry sink and counter are located in the southeast corner.

The interior of the original schoolhouse has a 9'10" ceiling height and the inside dimensions are 17'4" x 25'2". Floors are probably not original but are 2 ¼" maple tongue -and-groove. Wainscote is 3'3 ½" high of 3 1/8" single bead boards topped with a round edge cap. Walls are covered with 5" boards applied horizontally. 5" boards are also used for the ceiling. Walls and ceiling are original. The ceiling shows paint markings where six electrical fixtures were removed in the 1970 restoration.

The teacher's platform was rebuilt in the 1970 restoration and extends 5'9" from the west wall. The platform is constructed of 3 ¼" tongue-and-groove flooring. There is a blackboard above the south wainscote and also behind the teacher's desk on the west wall. On the north end of the platform is a non-original wood stove with an 8" round flue extending to a 22" x 16" chimney projecting from the back wall. Next to the chimney is an original door which measures 2' 7 ½" x 6'6" and leads to the back woodshed addition. On the north wall is a longer blackboard between the two north windows. On the east wall are the entrance door and two bookshelves built into the openings of the original windows. The hanging electric sconce-type kerosene lamps are replicas added in the 1970 restoration.

The back addition extends the building 6'6 ½" west by the full width and has a concrete floor. There are 4 lite sliding windows on the north and south walls. Walls are covered with 7" wide boards applied with round headed nails horizontally to studs.

### **GARAGE:**

Originally the property had a drive-through buggy shed. In the 1920s it was replaced by a dirt floor garage. The garage stands today but was upgraded with a concrete foundation and floor in 2010. The garage measures 10' X 16' and is built of ship-lapped siding. The garage is painted white.

## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☒ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☐ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- ☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B Removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

### Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION

### Period of Significance

1878-1952

### Significant Dates

1878, CA. 1920

### Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above)

n/a

### Cultural Affiliation

n/a

### Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN/Olson, Anton

### Period of Significance (justification)

The building was in operation as a first through eighth grade school from 1878-1952.

### Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)



DRAFT

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria)

The North Grove School is historically significant because of its association and contributions to the educational patterns in the town of Sycamore, the county of DeKalb and the State of Illinois. Swedish immigrants built the school in 1878 as a Lutheran parochial and Sunday school. Two years later the County of DeKalb purchased the building and it became part of the public school system. North Grove School was used as a one-room, eight-graded rural school from 1878 to 1952. Sometime after 1910 the State of Illinois awarded North Grove School the designation of Standard School, and in 1949 it became part of the Sycamore School District. In 1952 the consolidation of schools in Sycamore brought about the closing of North Grove School. For a short time it continued to be used as a gathering place for the neighborhood Community Club. It is still owned by the Sycamore School District #427 and is used by the district and the community as a learning tool, giving both children and adults a peak into the educational history of the area.

---

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

**United States**

In 1783, when the Revolutionary War ended, 95 percent of the American population lived on farms. The federal Land Ordinance of 1785 specified a system for selling the western land that so many living in the original states wished to settle. The land was to be surveyed (establishing north-south range lines) and then divided into six-mile square (36 square miles) townships. Each township would then be divided into 36 sections, each one-mile square (640 acres). The law stipulated that payment the government received for land in Section 16 of each township was to be used to support education in that township. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 indicated that the federal government's goal was that "schools and the means of education shall be forever preserved." The future state of Illinois, as part of the Northwest Territory established in 1787, was governed by the provisions of these federal laws. Historian Wayne Fuller states that the survey system inaugurated by these ordinances enabled farmers to map out the borders of thousands of independent school districts, "each with its own schoolhouse, community life, and history." According to Fuller, these small, independent school districts—copied after those in New England—were vitally important democratic institutions. (4)

Other forces were at work to foster the development of tax-supported elementary schools throughout Illinois and the other states. A host of education reformers, most notably Horace Mann and Henry Barnard, advocated the establishment of universal elementary public schools, which they called *common schools*. All the states mandated some kind of basic schooling by 1800, but the reformers argued that existing schools were often poorly equipped and badly constructed, many opened their doors only a few months of the year, and often the teachers were not well-educated. The reformers stated that every free child, whether poor or rich, needed to learn the same basic literacy skills as well as moral and democratic principles. This goal could be achieved if every state centralized, standardized, and funded common schools. These



reformers predicted that many of the nation's nagging social problems would be solved if every state provided well-equipped common schools with qualified, moral teachers. (6)

### Illinois

In 1818, the year Illinois became a state, the General Assembly affirmed its commitment to the principle of government-supported education by passing the Enabling Act of 1818. This law specified that the income from the sale of Section 16 land in every township "hall be granted to the State, for the use of the inhabitants of such township, for the use of schools". (5)

The commitment of the Illinois General Assembly to the school reformers' goals is indicated by the laws passed to bolster the development of public schools. One 1825 law ("An Act to Establish and Maintain a System of Free Schools") stated that every county in the state should have at least one common school. In addition, each township was to elect three district directors, to serve three-year terms, with the power to hire and fire teachers. Another 1825 law stipulated that the site for each school was to be determined by a majority vote of the legal voters (white males at least 21 years of age) in each district. Each school district was directed to elect three directors to serve three-year terms. The directors were given explicit, limited powers. They had no power to condemn private property; instead, a landowner had to agree to sell some land for a school site. If a district's legal voters did not agree by majority vote on a school site, the directors would select a site.

According to the Point School National Register of Historic Places Registration Form:

The 1830 Illinois legislature began chartering private subscription schools to individuals, joint stock companies, and religious organizations. By 1848, the legislature had issued over 125 charters. Agitation for free public schools began in the Midwest's rising towns and cities among the college educators, businessmen, and journalists. These reformers believed that free public schools would "preserve liberty and democracy through education, eliminate crime and poverty, and lift men to their own standards of conduct".

Illinois passed the Educational Law of 1841 which created township trustees to oversee all property in the township including Section 16; allowed associations of inhabitants to acquire land, build schools, and appoint three of their own as trustees to run the schools; and appointed County School Commissioners to sell school lands and apply their sale and township funds for the support of the schools.

The Educational Law of 1845 allowed people to tax themselves if two-thirds of the legal voters of the school district supported it. The tax could not exceed fifteen cents of 100 dollars assessed valuation. The law also made the Secretary of State ex-officio Superintendent of Common Schools and commissioners were made ex-officio County School Superintendents requiring them to visit and supervise schools, examine teachers, and issue teaching certificates. In 1847 the two-thirds vote was lowered to a simple majority of all properly qualified voters. . . . .

In 1855 Illinois finally passed a free public law joining other Midwestern states such as Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio who passed free public school legislation in the late 1840s and 1850s. The new law made it mandatory that schools must be supported by local tax levies and be open at least six months per year.

In Illinois, public schools were not common until 1854, when the legislature passed laws and taxes that established a school system similar to the one used today. Subjects taught included reading, writing, arithmetic, history, geography, and science. When students went to high school, they studied higher-level subjects such as mathematics, social science, English and modern languages. The subjects were taught comprehensively.

Illinois had no compulsory education laws until 1883, so many boys attended school only when they could snatch time from the heavy demands of farming.

Between 1909 and 1913 the standardization review process in Illinois included an evaluation in the following five categories: yard and outbuildings, the physical condition of the schoolhouse, furnishings and supplies, program organization (curriculum), and the quality of the teaching. The successful schools were awarded diplomas and door plates to the top schools. Illinois gained national recognition for the standard school program when the U.S. Commissioner of Education issued a bulletin highlighting the program in 1912.

### DE KALB COUNTY, ILLINOIS



DRAFT

DeKalb County is a 633-square mile tract of land with its eastern border 50 miles west of Chicago's Lake Michigan shore and its northern border around 35 miles south of the Wisconsin state line. The County was established by the Illinois General Assembly in 1837, from land previously included in neighboring Kane County.

DeKalb County is named in honor of Baron Johann deKalb, a German soldier who was killed while fighting with the American patriots in the Revolutionary War. Most of the county's earliest settlers were farmers moving west that made their land claims in close proximity to the groves of trees and the streams that were most abundant in the northern and southern areas of the county. Settlement later expanded to sparsely timbered prairie of the center of the county, particularly after the railroad lines came through.

Between the late 1830s and 1957, when the last one-room school closed, DeKalb County children were educated primarily in approximately 160 one-room schools scattered throughout 19 townships.

### **SYCAMORE, ILLINOIS**

The first settlers to the Sycamore area arrived in 1835. The first site of the town was platted by New York native, Christian Sharer just north of the Kishwaukee River. The river was dammed and a mill built and was in operation until 1886. The town on this site failed. This mill was approximately 2 miles north of the land where the North Grove School was built in 1878.

In 1837, the site of the town was moved to its present location nearby on higher ground and Sycamore was named the county seat of DeKalb County. As was often the case, the location of the county seat was sought by other neighboring communities but Sycamore retained that distinction. In 1839 the first hotel was built and original DeKalb County Courthouse was built in the city across State Street from the existing Courthouse. In 1849, a second courthouse was built in the same block the current courthouse stands. The third and present Courthouse was built in 1903. A time of steady growth for Sycamore began in 1848. The population grew from 262 in 1848 to 435 in 1851. The arrival of the Sycamore Cortland Chicago Railroad in the late 1850s also contributed to the growth of the town. By 1855, there were 41 commercial and industrial businesses. Sycamore was incorporated as a village in 1858 and as a city in 1869. The present population of Sycamore is 17,816. (2008)

The fertile and thinly forested land in northern Illinois beckoned to early settlers from the Eastern states and newly arriving immigrants seeking good farmland. President Lincoln's Homestead Act of 1862, the end of the Civil War and the expansion of the railroads brought many immigrants from Sweden to the Midwest and Northern Illinois. From the mid 1840s to 1910 there was mass immigration from Sweden to the United States. The Swedes left their homeland mostly because of economic problems born of a growing population and years of crop failures. Between 1868 and 1914, more than a million Swedes immigrated, mostly to the United States.

### **NORTH GROVE SCHOOL**

According to B. A. Welander in *THE PAROCHIAL SCHOOL, 1925*, "It is a well known fact that Swedish people who came to this country and became permanent citizens, as most of them did, were anxious not only to establish churches in their midst, but also to maintain schools for their children, in which they might receive instruction in the principles of religion and also learn in the language of their fathers, that they might profit from a study of rich and abundant literature..... immediately surrounding Sycamore, and as early as 1870 a Swedish congregation had been organized, and shortly after that the parochial school came into existence."

Soon after the Lutheran Church was established in 1870 the need for a school for the children was recognized. Because of the wide area that was served by the Church, the school program was divided into three sections. They were North Grove, East Grove, and City. These schools were organized in 1874 as 'Swede Schools' and met for two months at each location. During the early years the classes were held in member homes but as the enrollment increased this became very difficult to do. Any children who attended the school and were not members of the church were charged twenty-five cents a week.

On January 2, 1878, the following decisions were made at the annual meeting of this Swedish Lutheran congregation: that a school house should be built in the North Grove for an amount not to exceed \$200.00 and that it should be built between Lind's corner and Carlson's corner. A building committee was elected and the congregation promised them they would



pay for a lot on which to build, if they could not get the lot donated. Nels and Mary Lind donated land on old Brickville Road. So the school was built in the spring of 1878 and after completion, the building committee presented to the congregation a bill of \$11.00 for extra costs. The congregation agreed to pay. On July 10, 1878, a special meeting was held in order to purchase benches for \$19.00 for this school. At this time there also was an agreement made with Mr. John Flink, who lived across the road, to dig a well on his farm. The congregation would pay for the brick and in return be entitled to use the water from the well for all school purposes. It was not until 1925 that a well was drilled on the property by William Gilbert. This well exists today with a pump manufactured in 1912. This water was tested in 2009 and was potable at that time. In 1879 the records show that a stove was purchased and the school house was painted.

The North Grove School building had served a double purpose during its many years of existence: "first as a parochial and Sunday school founded by the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Samuel (*heard or asked of God*) Church of Sycamore and then as a public school of the DeKalb County system". Please note: "In 1881, the congregation was legally incorporated and changed its name from the designation Samuel to Salem Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church". Today it is known as Salem Lutheran Church-ELCA.

The Sunday school was organized in 1878 by Mr. C.J. Quarnstrom and at one time the attendance outnumbered that of the church in town. The enrollment was as high as 60 pupils. Some of the teachers who taught in the Sunday school were as follows: Mr. B.A. Wellander, Mr. John Swanson, Mrs. M. Linden, Mr. Ole Nelson, Mr. Gus Fant, Mr. N.P. Roos, Mr. Emil Linden, Hilda Lindahl, Mrs. A.C. Swedberg, Mrs. Lina Johnson and Mr. Carl Otto and Mr. Richard Swedberg. At the North Grove School, the Sunday school was discontinued about 1910.

The first Sunday and Swedish summer school teachers were students from Augustana College, now located in Rock Island, but at that time in Paxton, Illinois. A record of attendance book kept by Mr. B.A. Wellander who taught at the Sunday and Swedish summer school for 30 years indicates that the average attendance during the years 1887 to 1889 was around 25 pupils. Summarizing these records from a religious standpoint, the North Grove School served its purpose to the Salem Evangelical Lutheran Church for about 40 years.

It appears that (Sunday and Swedish school) classes continued to be taught in Swedish at least until the late 1890s when it was reported in the *Sycamore True Republican* that "Mr. B. A. Wellander has commenced . . . his 9<sup>th</sup> term . . . He instructs them in the Swedish language, that they may have some knowledge of their Mother tongue, and teaches them bible history, reading and writing."

John Lindahl became a superintendent of the school and offered rooming for some of the early teachers. The building was for a time known as the Lindahl School.

A request by the DeKalb County public school system to purchase this school house for an English public school was granted on May 19, 1880. The congregation agreed the price should be whatever they had invested in the property. The records at the DeKalb County Court House show that the price was \$290.00. A warranty deed was given by the trustees of the Swedish Evangelical Lutheran Church to the Trustee of Schools. However, the congregation still wanted the privilege to use the school for summer school and Sunday school. This was done for many years.

The records available of this public school as a district go back to 1888. However, school was held before that time. The records show that there were 41 pupils enrolled during the year 1900 and during the years since 1900 the attendance varied considerably.

The North Grove School stands out as an original example of integration in our American schools. At the close of the Civil War in 1865 the 105th Illinois Infantry Regiment returned to Sycamore. With them came a young man, a former slave named Henry Beard. He had joined the 105<sup>th</sup> while they were stationed in Kentucky. Mr. Beard was the first African American to reside in the Sycamore area. He lived with a family on Old State Road for a number of years and then traveled to Kansas to find a wife. Henry and Julia (Judy) nee Jones married in Geneva, Illinois, and settled in Sycamore where they purchased five acres of land in the North Grove. There they raised 14 children who, with all the area children, learned Swedish at the North Grove School. In the 1960s, it took new laws and federal troops to integrate the schools in the South yet this was accomplished at North Grove School without fanfare and as a matter of course in the late 1800s.

Following a new state law in 1919 mandating more sunlight, two windows were added to the south wall. Smaller children sat next to the south wall so they would not hinder light coming into the school as much as the taller children would.

"His and hers" wooden outhouses were situated on the back of the lot. When teachers began to drive carriages to school, a small wooden structure was provided to house the horse. The building was not very wide: actually the horse was let into



the building through the back door and let out through the front door, since there was no room to turn the horse around. Later, when the teacher began to drive a car, a small garage was built adjacent to the road. Thus as times and needs changed, the structures surrounding the schoolhouse changed but the basic building still stands.

In 1910 North Grove School met the criteria for classification as a Standard School. Consequently, a sign remains above the door to the school reading STANDARD SCHOOL.

In the decade of the 1920s, the additions to the front and back of the building were constructed by Norwegian neighbor and woodworker, Anton Olson. The addition to the front added a vestibule that would accommodate a dry sink, the students' coats and lunches. A 'communal' ladle was used by the students until the day the school was permanently closed. For 'sanitary' reasons, after taking a sip, the student would throw away the water that remained in the ladle. The addition to the back of the school was used for various purposes through the years. It was used to house wood or coal for the 'fuel' for the stove. Further, the teacher would use the area for storage of supplies that she would use for her daily tasks.

1947 the North Grove Community Club was established as a social organization for the neighboring families. Meetings were held regularly and social events, including bridal showers were enjoyed at the school setting.

In 1949, the Sycamore Community Unit District was organized, and it included the North Grove District. The school was closed in 1952 when districts were consolidated. However, this school building retained its role as a neighborhood social gathering location. While other old schoolhouses of the city's district were sold at auction, North Grove School remained as it was and was leased to the Community Club for its purposes. Neighbors continued to hold the North Grove Community Club meetings in the school and maintained the building until the mid 1950s. When the DeKalb County Regional School District decided to use the school as a resource center in the 1970s, the school building was usable, thanks in part to the Community Club. Undoubtedly, the schoolhouse remains today intact due to the fact it was not sold in the early 1950s like so many of the other county schoolhouses.

In 1970 Beverly Southern, former director of the DeKalb County Natural Resources Center obtained a small grant from the Sears Foundation for the purpose of restoration the school back to its late-1880s appearance. With the help of neighbors, alumnae, and friends and with funds from DeKalb Agriculture Association (Roberts Foundation) and Virgil C. Cook & Sons, Inc., the restoration was completed. North Grove School was leased by the DeKalb County Resources Center for use by county students as an education resource. Later, with the help of the DeKalb County Historical Society and Beverly Southern, the North Grove School was listed in the Illinois Directory of Historical Buildings.

In 1984, Northern Illinois University was seeking a one-room school building to be moved to campus for the purpose of teaching the old methods of education. They contacted the Sycamore school board about the possibility of moving North Grove School from its present location. This plan came to the attention of neighbors and alumni of North Grove School. They formed a committee, made plans to conserve and care for the old building, and to leave it in the spot where it had been built and stood since 1878. From this beginning the North Grove School Association was formed and still is active in preserving the building and grounds.

Today the school is owned by the Sycamore School District #427 and is operated by the North Grove School Association.

As an honor to the old schoolhouse, a new elementary school for Sycamore was named North Grove Elementary School in 2010.



**DRAFT**

**Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)**

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form)

*Jubilee Album 1870-1920 Swedish Ev. Lutheran Salem Congregation, Sycamore, DeKalb Co., IL*

*Upon this Rock, Salem's Centennial, 1870-1970, Sycamore, IL*

*North Grove School Centennial Year 1878-1978, BRIEF HISTORY OF THE NORTH GROVE SCHOOL*

*DeKalb County Historical-Genealogical Society, Rural School Journeys: A Legacy of Learning, Evansville, IN, 2006*

*Henry Beard file, Joiner History Room, Sycamore Public Library, Sycamore, IL*

*North Grove School file, Joiner History Room, Sycamore Public Library, Sycamore, IL*

*Preservation Inventory, North Grove School, William B. Coney, Architect, 20 December, 1984*

*Title Search, Chicago Title Insurance Company, Order No. 77956, dated December 13<sup>th</sup> 1984*

*The Clarksburg Schoolhouse, Clarksburg, Illinois, National Register of Historic Places Registration, OMB No. 1024-0018*

*Point School National Register of Historic Places Registration*

*Steve Bigolin, local historian and former member of the Illinois Historical Sites Advisory Council, 1998-2000*

*Progressive Era Rural Reform: Creating Standard School in the Midwest, William L. Sherman, Iowa Historic Preservation Alliance and Paul Theobald, Wayne State College*

*Carole Kingren Lichty, former student North Grove School, Sycamore, IL*

*Alice Stroberg Whitney, former student North Grove School, Sycamore, IL*

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been Requested)  
☐ previously listed in the National Register

**Primary location of additional data:**

☐ State Historic Preservation Office  
☐ Other State agency  
☐ Federal agency



North Grove School

Name of Property

DeKalb County, IL

County and State

\_\_\_\_\_ previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 \_\_\_\_\_ designated a National Historic Landmark  
 \_\_\_\_\_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

Local government  
 University  
☒ Other

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

The Sycamore Center, North Grove School  
 Name of repository: files

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreage of Property** Less than an acre  
 (Do not include previously listed resource acreage)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

3 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

2 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

4 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description** (describe the boundaries of the property)

A part of the South West Quarter (1/4) of the North East quarter (1/4) Section Nineteen (19) in Township Fortyone (41) North Range five (5) East of the 3rd P.M. being a part of lot 82 of said Section described as follows, Beginning at the North East corner of said lot and run thence west on the 1/4, 1/4, line six (6) rods, thence South six (6) rods, thence east six (6) rods, to the 1/4, 1/4 line, thence North six (6) rods to the place of beginning.

**Boundary Justification** (explain why the boundaries were selected)

The boundaries include the property that was historically associated with the school.

**11. Form Prepared By**name/title Teresa Irving, historianorganization North Grove School Association

date \_\_\_\_\_

street & number 4 Arrowhead Lanetelephone 815-762-3603city or town DeKalbstate ILzip code 60115e-mail tjsi11@comcast.net



DRAFT

---

**Additional Documentation**

---

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

---

**Photographs:**

---

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

**Name of Property:**

**City or Vicinity:**

**County:**

**State:**

**Photographer:**

**Date Photographed:**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

1 of \_\_\_\_.

---

**Property Owner:**

---

(complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO)

name Sycamore School District #427

street & number 245 W. Exchange Street

telephone 815-899-8100

city or town Sycamore,

state IL zip code 60178



North Grove School  
Name of Property

DeKalb County, IL  
County and State

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



# DRAFT

## National Registry Photograph Log Page

---

Name of Property: North Grove School  
City or Vicinity: Sycamore  
County: DeKalb  
State: Illinois  
Names of Photographers: Sycamore High School Photo Club:  
Jon Womack, coordinator  
Brianna Hooker  
Michael Landshaft  
Sarah Womack  
Teresa Irving  
Dates of Photographs: March, 2011 and April, 2011  
Location of Original Digital Files: 4 Arrowhead Lane, DeKalb, IL 60115  
Number of Photographs: 18

**Photo #1** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0001)

East façade (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing southwest.

**Photo #2** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0002)

East façade (right) and south elevation (left), camera facing northwest.

**Photo #3** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0003)

East façade (left) and north elevation (right), camera facing southwest.

**Photo #4** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0004)

East façade (right) and south elevation (left), camera facing northwest.

**Photo #5** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0005)

South elevation, camera facing north.

**Photo #6**(IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0006)

North elevation (left) and west elevation (right), camera facing southeast.

**Photo #7** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0007)

South elevation (left) and east elevation (right) boys outhouse, camera facing northwest.

**Photo #8** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0008)

East façade, camera facing west.

**Photo #9** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0009)

South interior wall 1920 front addition, east interior wall (left), west interior wall (right), camera facing south.



# DRAFT

## National Registry Photograph Log Page (continued)

Name of Property:	North Grove School
City or Vicinity:	Sycamore
County:	DeKalb
State:	Illinois

**Photo #10** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00010)

North interior wall 1920 front addition (right), west interior wall (left), camera facing northwest.

**Photo #11** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00011)

From 1920 front addition west interior classroom wall, camera facing west.

**Photo #12** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00012)

From 1920 front addition north interior classroom wall, camera facing northwest.

**Photo #13** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00013)

East classroom wall (left) peering into 1920 front addition (left) and south classroom wall (right), camera facing south east.

**Photo #14** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00014)

West classroom wall (right) and south classroom wall (left), camera facing southwest.

**Photo #15** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00015)

South classroom wall (left) and west classroom wall (right), camera facing southwest.

**Photo #16** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00016)

West classroom wall peering into 1920 storeroom addition (on right), south classroom wall (left) and north classroom wall (right), camera facing west.

**Photo #17** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00017)

East classroom wall (right) peering into 1920 front addition (right) and north wall (left), camera facing northeast.

**Photo #18** (IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_00018)

West 1920 storeroom addition wall (left) and north 1920 storeroom addition wall (right) camera facing northwest.





IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0001





IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0003





IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0004



IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0005





IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0006





IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0013





IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0014



IL\_DeKalb\_North Grove School\_0010